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A b s t r a c t

The method according to the invention permits a selected withdrawal of one or a few molecularly disperse or cellular components of a system, such as molecules, molecular complexes, vesicles, micelles, cells, optionally together with an associated volume element  $V$  having a size of  $10^{-9} \text{ l} \geq V \geq 10^{-18} \text{ l}$  from a larger sample volume. The selected transfer of the sought component to another environment is effected by defining the space and time of withdrawal by means of a signal correlating with the small component to be withdrawn. The method is particularly useful for the withdrawal of non-abundant components the existence of which can be detected in a preceding step by a scanning process. The method is also useful for the withdrawal of per se unidentified components.

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